

Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Education

Information Requested by Committee Members

Education Sector: Community Colleges

Committee Question: The Committee asked for a comparison of the North Carolina Center for Applied Textile Technology (Textile Center) of Gaston College and NC State College of Textiles.

Answer:

The Textile Center provided the following response to the Community Colleges System Office:

“The mission of the Textile Technology Center, as mandated by the North Carolina Legislature in 2005, is significantly different from that of the College of Textiles at North Carolina State University.

According to the legislation that created the Center in 2005:

» **Section 115D-67.1**

“The purpose of the Center for Applied Textile Technology is to develop a world-class workforce for the textile industry in North Carolina; support the textile industry by identifying problems confronting the industry and assisting the industry in solving them; garner support from the textile industry for the work of the Center; and serve as a statewide center of excellence that serves all components of the textile industry.”

North Carolina State University College of Textiles, by comparison, defines their mission as follows: *“Through innovative educational practices and multi-disciplinary research activities, we provide visionary leadership and collaborative services to the university, State and global communities.”*
(<http://www.tx.ncsu.edu/about/mission-and-vision.cfm>)

Stated plainly, The College of Textiles is about the education of students first, research second and the global industry third. The single most popular major within the College of Textiles is in the Merchandising area, where students learn how to put together global supply chains. They do all of these things very well, and are an excellent partner for the Technology Center.

When the NCCATT was re-chartered as a "Center of Excellence", it was taken out of the curriculum education arena, and commissioned to be a shared resource for the industry in North Carolina. The industry Advisory Board, as mandated by the Legislature, set the direction for the Center and recommended that we focus first on small scale new product development and product testing followed by training in the form of focused seminars and collaborative training with industry associations and government agencies. Two representatives from the College of

Textiles sit on the Advisory Board and help make certain that we avoid duplication of services and maximize available resources.

The time horizon of the two institutions is markedly different. The Textile Technology Center exists to assist the industry in solving today's problems in a timely fashion. With no other agenda but assisting our North Carolina clients, we are extremely focused and share the sense of urgency that our clients have, whether working on product demonstrations, product testing, or problem solving. Our work results in job creation, retention and renewal this week, this month, and this year.

Quite correctly, NCSU College of Textiles time focus is three, five, ten years out. They are about research, the Textile Technology Center is about development and application of technologies that already exist, or that has been invented and now need to be demonstrated in order to make them commercial. NCSU is educating the leaders of the future. The Textile Center trains people who are already in the industry and need to be updated on current practices and developments in order to remain effective."